

Governor's Workforce Investment Board Workforce System Committee

**Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena, Montana
June 8, 2006**

DRAFT MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Robbe Lindsay, Chair; Thomas Curry; Julie Jordan; and Fred Sargeson.

Committee Members Absent: Jody Messinger, Joan Miles, Rodney Miller, Alan Skari, and Teresa Wall-McDonald.

Staff: Pam Watson, Leisa Smith, and Jessica Snyder

Guests: Robert Thornton, Rebecca Riedl, Lacey Maloney, Leslie Duffy, Kathy Yankoff, Kate Kahle, Janet Snowberger, Wolfgang Ametsbichler, Jay Reardon, Debbie Krantz, Alyssa Townsend-Hudders, Jack Hardy, and Darla Joyner.

Welcome and Introductions

Committee Chair Robbe Lindsay called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Jessica Snyder conducted roll call and reviewed the documents in member's packets and Leisa Smith was introduced as the new SWIB Director.

Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus of the members present.

Approve Minutes from January 19, 2006 and March 9, 2006

Action approving the minutes could not be taken due to lack of a quorum.

Discussion Items

Conferencing Capabilities

Chairman Lindsay reported video conferencing could expand the SWIB's meeting capabilities by sending video and audio from Helena to select sites across Montana. The video and audio would be live and allow for forums and feedback from the public, one-stop centers, and committee members. Video conferencing also reduces travel and lodging expenses and offers a safe alternative to traveling in bad weather while increasing public relations and awareness of the SWIB. Video streaming can be viewed live or at a later time on the internet and is affordable. Video conferencing allows for PowerPoint and polling of participants. Chairman Lindsay reviewed the meeting costs with the committee and stated that approximately \$24,254.39 is spent annually for SWIB and committee meetings.

Chairman Lindsay reported Microsoft NetMeeting allows for video and audio conferencing, file transfers, has a whiteboard feature, and is secure. Participants would need a sound card, speakers, microphone, and high speed internet connection to participate on NetMeeting. The NetMeeting software and Microsoft Messenger software are free downloads that are required. Chairman Lindsay stated several possible problems with using NetMeeting include the requirement of a high speed internet connection and no technical support during the meeting.

Al Ekblad, Project Challenge: Work Again, demonstrated MegaMeeting. Mr. Ekblad stated the Project Challenge: Work Again offices have had problems with delay and the loss of audio and these could be issues for the committees and Board because there is no service company maintaining the feed. When

problems occur, the participants have to resolve the issues on their own. Chairman Lindsay stated in order to ensure that the two to three SWIB meetings a year are secure and dependable, it would be a good idea to use a third party vendor and explained Vision Net is a reputable company based out of Great Falls that provides excellent statewide coverage including rural areas and is currently working with the state. Vision Net provides on site operators and quality control personnel for video conferencing and streaming services that are affordable and scalable. Chairman Lindsay invited the committee members to attend a presentation by Vision Net after the meeting.

Tom Curry asked if each member would have access or would they have to attend at a central location. Chairman Lindsay stated each member would have access and the public members would have one point of access. Becky Riedl stated the South Central One-Stop has video conferencing capability and allow the public to use it for free. Mr. Curry stated access to the video conferences at the one-stop centers would be ideal to expose the public and committee members to the centers.

WIA Incentive Dollars

Kathy Yankoff reported the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) is able to award states incentive money for meeting or exceeding performance and twenty-three states qualified for innovative workforce development and educational programs incentives. In order to qualify for the incentive dollars, all partner agencies need to meet or exceed performance, not just WIA. Montana did not obtain eligibility because one of the seventeen WIA performance measures was not met. Montana did not meet the Customer Satisfaction Rate because of the response rate for employers. New procedures have been established for this year and staff is confident that this measure will be met or exceeded. Tom Curry asked if it was difficult to get employers to respond. Ms. Yankoff explained that it wasn't difficult to get a response from the employers but the issue was getting the response in the sixty day timeline as required. The employers cannot be contacted until the participant has exited the program and that is why the measure was missed. She again stated that the WIA Unit has taken steps to improve the process and ensure the measure is met for this year.

Policy Manual

Kathy Yankoff reported prior to the single statewide planning area, the local boards and the State each had a policy manual. Staff has consolidated both manuals into one and distributed it at the technical assistance trainings in March. Jay Reardon stated the manual was published in a timely manner and it was clear and concise and the website allows for questions and comments. Staff requested the committee recommend the SWIB endorse the Policy Manual but no action could be taken to the SWIB due to lack of a quorum.

Waiver Request

Gary Wright stated WIA does not allow training for incumbent workers but the Governor's discretionary funds can be used. An incumbent worker is an employed worker that receives training for upward mobility allowing for entry level jobs to become vacant. For the past three years, the Governor has awarded Department of Commerce \$400,000 of Governor's discretionary funds to provide incumbent worker training. On March 6, 2006, USDOL sent a Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) stating states can submit a waiver requesting WIA funds to be used to train incumbent workers.

Mr. Wright explained that 1.2 million dollars were reallocated to the Department of Labor and Industry from the old administrative entity and those dollars will be used to offset the decrease in funding for the service providers, cover the costs of increased staffing and activity of the SWIB, and one more WIA staff person. Mr. Wright stated the Department of Labor and Industry is requesting the SWIB approve the transfer of up to \$400,000 of Workforce Investment Act Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funds per year for three years to the Department of Commerce for the use of incumbent worker training. The Department of Commerce has used the money awarded from the Governor for the past three years and leveraged it to 1.4 to 1.5 million dollars and has demonstrated to be a successful program. Using the reallocated funds for incumbent worker training allows the Governor more flexibility with the discretionary funds and if the Department of Commerce does not use the funds, the funds could be

moved into the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Tom Curry asked how it was legal to move targeted funds from Adult and Dislocated Worker programs into discretionary funds. Mr. Wright explained other states have been awarded waivers and stated the moving of funds would not cost the service providers. Mr. Curry asked if each year it would be \$400,000. Mr. Wright stated this year it could be \$400,000 but the waiver allows for up to \$400,000 and depending on funding the allocation may change.

Darla Joyner stated businesses in the Bozeman area have applied for incumbent worker training dollars and she had heard that even though the Department of Commerce leverages the dollars, the program is not effective for small businesses. Mr. Wright stated the Department of Commerce has published rules on the use of the funds and the funds are targeted for larger employers and recommended the committee members talk to the SWIB member representing the Department of Commerce, Tony Preite, regarding the issue. Mary Berg asked if the money would be targeted for the WIRED region. Mr. Wright stated the money could be used statewide and the WIRED grant has its own incumbent worker training possibilities. Wolfgang Ametsbichler stated a partnership between the incumbent worker providers and the WIA service providers may be beneficial. Mr. Curry asked if there was any effort to streamline the process for small businesses to be awarded the incumbent worker dollars from the Department of Commerce. Mr. Wright stated the Department of Commerce targeted the funds to higher wage jobs and the Department of Labor and Industry informed them that they couldn't do that anymore and that the funds needed to be available for training in self sufficiency wage jobs but the performance of the Department of Commerce's program is exceptional and it is used as an example for other states.

No action could be taken by the committee due to lack of a quorum.

Snapshot Document

Jessica Snyder reported the narrative information for the Snapshot document that contains information on Montana's workforce development programs was almost complete. Ms. Snyder stated the narrative report would be used to create the Snapshot document and the SWIB needs to approve funding to have the Snapshot printed. Pam Watson stated the Snapshot was published two years ago and it was well received. Mary Berg said it was helpful to Career Futures and the Community Management Team. Darla Joyner asked if the last Snapshot was available online. Ms. Watson stated yes. Leisa Smith stated the SWIB staff will put the narrative information on the website when it was completed.

No action could be taken by the committee due to lack of a quorum.

Next Meeting

The committee discussed topics for the next meeting including:

- Approve minutes from January 19, March 9, and June 8, 2006
- Report on how other states are performing and looking at the workforce system
- What Native American initiatives are being pursued in other states?
- Test run video conferencing at Capitol Building via Vision Net
- Receive feedback from public regarding the video conferencing
- Coordinate with the One Stop Centers for the video conference meeting
- IPI (Integrated Performance Information)

The committee agreed to meet in conjunction with the Labor Day Report and SWIB meeting on August 31 and September 1, 2006.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned via consensus at 10:52 a.m.